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THE RISK OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Letter dated 9 February 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 8 February 1996 addressed to you by the Secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under the item entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".

(Signed) Ali Sunni MUNTASSER
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

Letter dated 8 February 1996 from the Secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya addressed to the Secretary-General

On 14 January 1996, Binyamin Netanyahu, leader of the Israeli Likud party, told Israel Radio that the Likud would not relinquish Israel's nuclear capabilities even if there were to be peace between Israel and Syria, Iraq, Iran and Libya. He added that in the event Syria, Iraq, Iran and Libya were prepared to sign a peace treaty with Israel in exchange for Israel's renunciation of its non-conventional, nuclear, chemical and bacteriological capabilities he would refuse to sign such a treaty.

Furthermore, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres stated on 6 February 1996 that Israel would never agree to renounce its nuclear option. He stressed this intention during his recent visit to London, where he stated that Iran, Iraq and Libya constituted a threat to the security of his country and that Israel would therefore never think of re-evaluating its strategic weapons.

These statements confirm in a manner that leaves no room for doubt that the Israelis possess nuclear, bacteriological and chemical weapons and that they are thus alone in the Middle East region in possessing weapons of mass destruction.

We regard the Israeli accusations levelled at the Jamahiriya as absurd and deserving of ridicule. How can my country be a source of danger and a threat to a State that possesses nuclear weapons?

These Israeli statements have the gravest implications, for they confirm the intransigent Israeli position with respect to the question of ridding the Middle East region of weapons of mass destruction, and particularly nuclear weapons. They clearly show that the Israelis are persisting in their defiance of the will of the international community and of repeated United Nations resolutions calling for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East, most recently General Assembly resolution 50/73, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", in which the Assembly "Calls upon Israel and all other States of the region that are not yet party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons, to renounce possession of nuclear weapons and to accede to the Treaty at the earliest date".

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya views these statements as a clear indication of the desire of the Israelis to exercise hegemony over the region through their possession of devastating nuclear weapons and of their persistence in disregarding all international resolutions calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

We should here like to mention the unwarranted attitude of hostility adopted by the United States towards the Jamahiriya and the repeated accusations of terrorism that it makes against my country while making no effort whatever to

persuade the Israelis to renounce their nuclear schemes and place their nuclear facilities under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The peace-loving people of my country would like to call your attention to the gravity of these statements and to the adverse impact they may have on security and peace in the Middle East region and in the world.

(Signed) Omar Mustafa MUNTASSER
Secretary of the General People's
Committee for Foreign Liaison and
International Cooperation